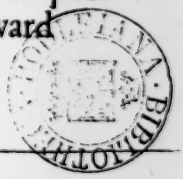
THE RESTING PLACE OF THE MINDE.

THAT IS,
A PROPOVNDING OF
the wonderfull prouidence of God, whereupon a Christian man ought to rest and repose himselfe, euen when all outward meanes of helpe are cut off from him.



WRITTEN
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TO THE CHRISTIAN READER.

TWO things there are especially that are wont to impeach and impaire our comfort and confidence in distresse and danger, [a] an eye of flesh, *that we see with*, and [b] an arme of flesh, *that we trust to*. The eye of flesh *being able to pierce no deeper then naturall reason can reach*, [c] *keepeth vs, while we see with it, from conceiuing a possibilitie of good issue or successe, where our owne shallow capacitie cannot apprehend any*. And the arme of flesh *while we trust to it and relie on it, causeth our trust and confidence* [d] *to ebbe and flow as the outward meanes either mend or impaire, and to quaile consequently, when that arme of flesh faileth, which our hopes were pinned on before*. [e] *Both keepe vs from view of, and rest vpon* Gods power and prouidence, *that should be the maine* [f] staffe *and* stay *of our soules in such cases. The cure and remoouall of these two dangerous and disquieting euills is by the Author of this short discourse therein intended. Which he endeuoureth to effect, partly*

[a] *Iob* 10.4. *Num.*11.6. *Psal.*74.9.
[b] 2 *Chron.*32.8. 2 *Chron.*16.7. *Esai.*31.1,3. *Ierem.*17.5.
[c] *Num.*11.21, 22. *Ierem.*32.24,25. *Ezech.*37.3,11.
[d] *Esai.*7.2,9. *Psal.*55.3,4,5. *Exod.*14.11. & 16.3. & 17.3.
[e] *Exod.*17.7. *Iudg.*6.19.
[f] משען *scipio. Psal.*18.18. *Esai.*50.10. 2 *Chro.*13.18. & 14.11. & 16.8.

partly by laying open the infinite power of God shewed [g] *in producing the creatures when at first they were not; a point that naturall reason is not well able to conceiue, how any* [h] *something, and much lesse, how so many, and so excellent things, should be raised out of nothing: and partly by consideration of his admirable prouidence, in preseruing them at first, being so miraculously produced,* [i] *not by the ordinarie meanes whereby now they are maintained, which as yet then were not, but by such extraordinarie courses as he pleased then to supply till that ordinarie course, that now we see setled, were established in the creature. Nor is this his* [k] *power and prouidence now growne weaker or other; as being faltred or altred in these times from that which at first it was. Nor hath he lesse care of his* Church *now, then he had then of the* world; *it being the only* [l] *world that he regardeth in the world: But that as he hath shewed himselfe a wonderfull work-man in the producing and constituting of it,* [m] *in extracting it out of that rude and confused* chaos *of this* [n] wicked world *wherein it lay ouerwhelmed at first; and endowing it with that beautifull frame and furniture, that* [o] *hath dazled the eyes of the whole world to behold: so he is able still to shew himselfe (and will vndoubtedly so doe; for* [p] he cannot lie, *nor* [q] denie himselfe;) *as mightie a protector* [r] *in the preseruing, maintaining, and vpholding of it, euen then when it seemeth to stand vpon most desperate*

[g] Heb.11.3.
[h] Οὐκ ἂν γένοιτο ἐκ τοῦ μὴ ὄντος. Epicur. apud Laert. Nullam rem è nihilo gigni diuinitus vnquã. Lucret. lib. 1. -nil posse creari De nihilo- Ibid. Οὐδὲν ἐκ τοῦ μηδενὸς ἔρχεται, μηδ' εἰς τὸ ἐκ τοῦ ὄντος ἀπέρχεται. M. Antonin. vita sua l. 4. De nihilo nihil; in nihilum nil posse reuerti. Pers. sat 3.
[i] Dicm qui per solem nunc dat, sine sole tunc dedit. Aug. de ciuit. lib. 11. cap. 7. Gen. 1. 3, 5, 16. Sed & terræ fructus sine sole proruperunt, qui iuuior est herbis, iunior fœno. Ambros. hexam. l. 3. c. 6. Gen. 1. 12, 16. Qui dedit diem sine sole, dedit herbam sine pluuia. Gen. 2. 5, 6. Qui per pluuiam nunc dat, sine pluuia tunc dedit. Aug. de Gen. ad lit. l. 5. c. 6.
[k] Num. 11. 23. Esai. 50. 2. & 59. 1.
[l] Mundus electorum siue credentium; mundus non hostilis, de quo Joan. 17. 9. & 1 Ioan. 5. 19. & 1 Cor. 11. 32. sed fidelis de quo 2 Cor. 5. 19. & Joan. 17. 21. & 3. 16, 17. Aug. in Joan. tract. 110. & 107.
[m] Deut. 4. 34. & 7. 6. Exo. 19. 5.
[n] Ioh. 15. 19. Col. 1. 13. Ephes. 5. 8.
[o] 1 Joh. 5. 19. Galat. 1. 4.
[p] Esai. 52. 14. & 24. 23. & 62. 3, 15, 19, 20, 21, 22. & 61. 9. & 62. 2, 12.
[q] Tit. 1. 2. 2 Tim. 2. 13.
[r] Esai 37. 35. Psal. 125. 1, 2.

tearmes,

tearmes, and that by extraordinarie meanes, if need be, though the ordinarie should vtterly faile. Now how needfull and seasonable the meditation and consideration hereof is in these times, none can be ignorant, that shall seriously take into their thoughts the distracted, distressed, and almost desperate estate of Gods Church in most parts at this present; if with the eye of flesh we behold it, ready to sinke irrecouerably, and to be swallowed vp againe in that confused Chaos, *out of which at first it was extracted; or if we looke after outward meanes and humane helps, left in a manner vtterly forlorne, those armes of flesh being either broken or withdrawne away from it, that it seemed formerly to trust vnto. So that* [f] the verie foundations *of* [t] Sion *and* Sions *hopes may seeme* to be razed; *and as well might her frends feare, as her foes hope and expect a generall subuersion and vtter extirpation of her; if* [*] the eye of faith *be not set open* (the eye of flesh *being closed vp) to see a better issue then carnall reason can apprehend; and* [u] *an higher power expected to protect and guard her, as* [*] a fierie wall *about her, then humane helps are either likely or able to afford. Nor can I easily imagine, that he hath this eye at all yet opened, that findeth not some defect in it, when he endeuoureth to fix it* [x] *on this obiect, which it concerneth it to be most conuersant about in these cases; and that is not willing therefore to vse all good meanes* [y] *to helpe and releeue the weakenesse and dimnesse of it. Among many others, I may well commend this one vnto thee, which if it shall, by Gods blessing accompanying it, worke that on thee, that was wrought* [z] *vpon the seruant of the Prophet* Elisha, *it may well rid thy minde of such feares, as he then was, and thou now*

[f] *Psal.* 11.3.
[t] *Psal.*87.1.
[*] 2 *Cor.*5 8. *Heb.*11.27.
[u] *Psal.*11.4. & 121.1,4,5. *Esay* 27.3.
[*] *Zech.*2,5,8. *Murus non sareus, aut areus, sed igneus, qui & cominus arceat, & eminus terreat. Theophyl.*
[x] *Psal.*25.13. 2 *Paral.*20.12.
[y] *Apoc.*3.18.
[z] 2 *King.*6.16, 17.

now mayst be assaulted withall, and may direct thy soule amids many troublesome cogitations and distractions to [a] a Resting place, *wherein it may, as with* [b] the Doue *in* Noahs Arke, *safely and quietly repose it selfe, though with that* [c] floud *that* the Dragon *hath begun to cast out of his mouth, the whole world should be afloat. Which effect wishing it may haue with all that peruse it and make vse of it, I leaue thee to him that hath promised* [d] *neuer to leaue his, and rest*

[a] Psal. 55. 6, 7, 8.
[b] Genes. 8. 9.
[c] Apoc. 12. 15.

[d] Gen. 28. 15. Iosh. 1. 9. 1. Sam. 12. 22. Psal. 9. 9, 10. Heb. 13. 5.

Thine in Christ,

Thomas Gataker.

THE RESTING PLACE OF THE MINDE,

for all afflicted hearts, when *outward meanes faile them.*

Deliuered in a Sermon vpon

GEN. 2. 4, 5, 6.

Verſ. 4. *Theſe are the generations of the heauens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heauens.*

5. *And euery plant of the field before it was in the earth, & euery herbe of the field before it grew: for the Lord God had not cauſed it to raine vpon the earth, neither was there a man to till the ground.*

6. *But a miſt went vp from the earth, and watered all the earth.*

IN theſe words, *Moſes* entreth againe into a more thorow handling of ſome things, which pertaine to the former Story of the Creation, and therefore ſome haue thought that the ſecond Chapter of this Booke ought to begin at theſe words. Now

this more ſpeciall handling concerneth, Firſt, the creation of the whole world in generall: Secondly, it concerneth certaine particular created things in ſeuerall.

Of the ſhort Rehearſall of the Creation *in generall.*

THat is comprehended in theſe words, *verſ.* 4. *Thus were the heauens and the earth made*, or *theſe are the generations*, (whence this Booke is called *Geneſis*) *of the heauens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heauens.* The meaning is cleare; namely this briefly, that the creation of the heauens and the earth is iuſt ſuch, and no other then *Moſes* hath related and declared it to be in the firſt Chapter of this Booke. Now this right meaning of our Text is the point of doctrine that we are to obſerue, that, namely, The world was euen in that manner created, as is before ſhewed and declared by *Moſes*: this ought to be well conſidered of vs, for *Moſes* hath once alſo formerly endeuoured to imprint it into our minds as a point of great vſe, namely in 1. *verſ.*

The Vſes of the Doctrine. 1. This warneth vs that we take heed of the dotages of many Philoſophers, which haue vttered many vaine things concerning the Creation of the world, as that it hath been from eternity, &c. It warneth vs alſo that whenſoeuer in this preſent world (taken in the ſtate it now ſtandeth in) we finde many things confuſed, troubled,

and

and out of faſhion, wee lay not the fault thereof on God the Creator of the world, as if hee had created the world ſo corrupt, for *Moſes* witneſſeth expreſly that it was not ſo in the beginning, but that God created the world, and ſet it not in a corrupt, but in an exceeding good eſtate, *Gen.* 1. 31. When the world therefore ſtood in the condition wherein it was firſt created of God, there were no wicked & malignant ſpirits, no euill paſſions of ſpightfulnes, reuenge, enuy, &c. in men: no ill weather, no infected ayre, no ſtinking pooles, no vnfruitfull ſeaſons, no ſickneſſes, no diſeaſes, no warres, no famine, no mortality; but it was all very good.

Secondly, this Doctrine ſerueth to ſtirre vs vp to enquire how this great and mighty workmanſhip of the whole world is become ſo deformed and diſordred as wee now ſee it to bee, what might be the thing that hath ſet this great clock of the world ſo out of frame?

Anſw. It is our ſinne, the ſinne of man hath giuen this nethermoſt world ſuch a blow, that it is put altogether out of frame; ſo ſoone, namely, as man began to loue the things of this world, the creature more then the Creator himſelfe, is hee and all the world for his ſake iuſtly become accurſed, *Gen.* 3. as wee ſhall heare thereof more at large heereafter.

Wee therefore learning that man corrupting himſelfe, hath alſo corrupted the world, ought to endeuour to amend our ſelues, and to labour to become new creatures, that by that meanes all things may become new, 2. *Cor.* 5. 17. and returne into

a better estate; for certainly the prosperity of this nether world dependeth much vpon the condition and estate of man; if man ordereth himselfe well, the whole world vseth to fare the better for it: see to this purpose the 72. and the 65. *Psalmes*. Contrarily, if the inhabitants of the earth behaue themselues ill, the world thereby is heauily oppressed, *Esa.* 24. 19. *the earth mourneth and the heauen aboue is sorrowfull, Ier.* 5. 28.

Furthermore, we haue another thing diligently to be obserued out of the words of this fourth verse, namely, that *Moses* calleth the Creator of this world *Lord*, or *Iehouah*, that is, one that hath his being of himselfe; yea, that is the being of all beings, from whom all things receiue their being and subsistence; and that is such a being as hath all good and desirable things in their perfection, in himselfe; for that word *Iehouah* importeth so much: and therefore it is otherwhere testified, that *euery good and perfect gift commeth from the Father of lights, Iam.* 1. 17. and that we all together, as many as wee are, *doe liue, moue, and haue our being in him, Act.* 17. 28. In like manner, the Lord our God Creator of all the world is such a being, as giueth (if he will) being to things that as yet are not, for he *calleth the things that are not as if they were, and causeth them actually to come forth vpon his calling as if they had been before, Rom.* 4. 17.

Now in that *Moses* euen heere beginneth to call God the Creator, *Iehouah*, that must diligently bee considered; for verily it importeth much: for whereas hee shewing in the former Chapter how the Creation of the world was effected, calleth the Crea-

Creator aboue 30. times by the name of *God*, but not ſo much as once by the name of *Lord* or *Iehouah*, but now heere hauing againe ſhewed how it ſtood with the Creation of the world, hee calleth him henceforth, *Iehouah Elohim*, God the Lord, euen eleuen times in this Chapter alone: without queſtion this is not without great reaſon, and fitneſſe thus caried: for whereas the world, conſiſting now of all its perfect parts, ſo well furniſht with and prouided of all things, doth ſo glorioufly ſet forth it ſelfe, as if it were the thing that properly and by a certaine eminency had ſubſiſtence, yea the onely thing that had firme and faſt being, (in ſo much, that ſome of the Philoſophers haue been occaſioned to thinke, that it was from eternitie, and others of them haue taken it for God) here commeth *Moſes* forth, and giueth vs to vnderſtand, by this cariage of the matter, that notwithſtanding all this, not the world (which ſets forth it ſelfe ſo faire, and it alone ſo preſents it ſelfe vnto our eyes, that thereby our hearts may ſoone be ſet thereon) is the being of beings, but that God the *Lord*, whom we with bodily eyes cannot ſee, who hath created the world of nothing, is alone the being of beings, and he that hath his eſſence of himſelfe, and that by conſequent, all true being, and ſubſiſtence, is to be found, not in the world, but in God, the Creator thereof: ſee 1 *Cor.* 7.31. *Exod.* 3.14. and therefore thus ſpeaketh the Pſalmiſt, *Thou haſt of old laid the foundations of the earth, the heauens are the worke of thine hands; they ſhall periſh, but thou endureſt; they ſhall waxe old as doth a garment; they are changed as*

a cloth, when thou changeſt them, but thou remaineſt the ſame, and thy yeeres haue no end, Pſal. 102.26,27, 28. Euen as alſo experience teacheth vs, that men, which are the honourableſt part of the world, doe die, and one generation paſſeth, and another commeth on, and God all the while looketh on, and ſeeth them ſucceed, but he himſelfe abideth alwayes the ſame, and is not changed, *Pſalm.* 90. 2.

1. Hence haue we occaſion to complaine, that whereas it thus ſtandeth with the world, & with the Lord our God; and whereas we are thus informed, euen at the firſt, out of the mouth of the Lord himſelfe, what a nothing the world is, and what perfection there is in God, yet notwithſtanding, this idle and empty world, and the vaine things thereof, doe ſteale our hearts from the Lord our God; yea that the world vndermineth euen the very ſoueraignty of our God, her Lord, and ſecretly draweth to her ſelfe the honour which belongeth to God alone, as wofull experience teacheth daily, that men forſake God (who hath giuen the world her being) for the world, and the things thereof, cleauing to them, and truſting in them, which notwithſtanding without God can no whit profit vs; for the world ſtandeth not of it ſelfe, and hath no ſtabilitie but through God. If then we hang our hearts and our welfare on the world, we hang them on a looſe naile, which will ſoone be pulled out, and then downe fall we, and all that hangs thereon, *Eſa.* 22.25.

Notwithſtanding all this, yet depend men on the world, that gaze they alwayes on, and thereon faſten they their hearts, forgetting all the while, & not regarding

regarding the being of beings, the true *Iehoua*, the Lord of all the world: yea it is now come to that passe with the children of men, that the more abundance they haue of worldly things (whereby in reason they ought to be moued the more to loue God, and to trust in him, who hath made all those things, and giuen them vnto them) the more they take occasion thereby to fall from him, and to cleaue to the world: see *Deut.*32.15. 1.*Sam.*28.29.*Hos.*13.6.

This hath caused the Lord God iustly to curse the world, and men that trust in it, namely, when they begin to honour the creature aboue the Creator, *Gen.* 3. *Rom.* 1.25. euen as a soueraigne King iustly curseth such a one of his creatures, (as they vse to speake) whom he hath aduanced, who begins to draw the hearts of his subiects to himselfe, and to vndermine his Kingly soueraigntie; and curseth together with him, all those that conspire with him, and fall from the King.

2. An exhortation to repent of this wickednesse, and to learne to know the Creator of the world to be the true *Iehoua*, that being of beings, who alone hath all good and desirable things, perfectly in and of himselfe; so that all those things which appeare in the world so beautifull, so glorious, so pleasant, so sweet, and delightfull to our eyes, are only as so many little sparkes, springing out of that full perfection of beauty, glory, louelinesse, and delightfull sweetnesse, which in God the true *Iehoua* is alwayes to be found, in whose right hand alone, as in a perfect Magazin or store-house, *the fulnesse of all ioy is closed vp*, *Psal.*16. 11. yea all that we haue need of, and

and may refresh vs, may there be found; so that he but opening his right hand, he presently replenisheth all things liuing, as the Psalmist w tnesseth, *Psal.*45.15,16. therefore acknowledging the Lord our God for such an all-sufficient God, euen as indeed he is, let vs accordingly alwayes offer these two things to his diuine maiestie.

1. That we accustome our selues by the fruition of these outward things, wherein we finde any sweetnesse, or delight, to lift vp our hearts to God, the Father of lights, who giueth them, and from whom they descend, endeuouring (as it is most meet) by those sparkes, which flie out from that cleare light, to be led to the same great light it selfe; and by those little riuelets, which flow so pleasantly from so sauing a fountaine, to be conducted to the fountaine it selfe; for it is euen to that end alone, that God doth here *fill our hearts with food and gladnesse*, *Act.* 14. 17. or indeed suffereth vs to enioy any good at all: it is (I say) that we might learne thereby, to know, acknowledge, loue, and trust in him: therefore we ought as often as we meet with any good thing in the world, to inure our selues thereby to remember him. Finde we any delight in our wife, children, state, office, &c? let vs then lift vp our hearts vnto him, and presently consider to thinke with our selues on this manner: This is but a ray of that light, this is but a drop of that sea of delights which is in God. Are then the creatures so sweet, so pleasant, and so louely? How sweet then, pleasant, and louely, must the Creator himselfe be? And thereout ought we to stirre vp our hearts

hearts to the loue of God. This thus practiſed of vs, will preſerue vs, that we ſhall not be (which happeneth to many to their deſtruction) by the things of this world drawne away from God; yea it ſhall cauſe vs to loue God the more, the more ſweetneſſe we receiue by taſting of theſe earthly things.

2. That we hold good proportion in our affection and loue towards God, and the creatures of the world: for we may loue the things of this world, if we hold iuſt proportion in our loue: the Lord is well contented, yea he vouchſafeth vs it, that we take our delight in the things which we enioy in this world; yea he commandeth that the married man ſhould reioyce himſelfe with the wife of his youth, *let her loue* (ſaith he) *ſatisfie thee, and refreſh thy ſelfe in her loue alwayes:* he granted alſo to his people, that *they ſhould reioyce before the Lord their God, ouer all that they had brought, Deut.* 12. 18. For euen the things of this world, are the Lords things, and God loueth them as they are his things. Haue we then beauty, health, riches, a table well furniſhed, &c? Behold God is ſo good, that he well can endure that we loue them, prouided that we hold good proportion in our loue, and that we remember to loue the Lord much more, who indeed is worthy of much more loue then all the things of the world; and that we, if at any time the loue of God and the loue of worldly things concurre, and that we muſt chuſe which of theſe two things we will rather depend on, God, or the world: that we (I ſay) in this caſe, be alwayes reſolued to cleaue to God, and to forgoe the world.

For in this caſe, the *loue of the world is very enmitie with God, Iam.* 4. 4. and therefore in this caſe may we not *loue the world, nor any thing that is therein, 1 Ioh.* 2. 15. yea in this caſe ought we *rather to hate the world, and cleaue vnto God, Matth.* 6. 24. *Mat.* 10. 37, &c.

Wherefore whenſoeuer the world, and God the Creator thereof, come in this concurrence before vs; when we fall into ſuch a ſtrait, that we can enioy or vſe neither theſe, nor any other worldly things, without breaking or tranſgreſſing ſome of the commandements of God, in the obedience of which alone, we can ſhew that honour and loue which we owe vnto God, 1 *Ioh.* 5. 3. we ought in this caſe to let goe, yea to caſt from vs the deareſt things of this world, were they as deare to vs as our right eye, or hand, rather then we ſhould preſume to breake the leaſt of Gods commandements, and ſo diſhonour, deſpiſe, and anger him that is Lord of all the world: ſee *Mat.* 5. 28, 29, &c.

Of the more ſpeciall handling of certaine *particular created things.*

THis is begun by *Moſes* at the fift verſe, and it reacheth to the end of this chapter, containing in it chiefly theſe two things: 1. The clothing and adorning of the earth, whereupon man was to liue, ver. 5, 6. 2. The ſpeciall creation of man, with certaine peculiar things thereto belonging, in the reſt of the chapter. At this time meane we to ſpeake of the firſt alone, namely, of the adorning of the earth

earth, which was done on the third day, as we may reade *Gen.* 1. *v.* 10, 11. Now *Moſes* teſtifieth three things concerning this: 1. what fruits and increaſe the Lord brought forth of the earth to adorne it with: 2. how he brought them forth: 3. how he maintained them in the beginning, ver. 6.

What fruits the Lord God brought forth *to adorne the earth with.*

AS concerning the firſt, the text witneſſeth that the Lord brought forth *all manner of trees and plants of the field, which neuer before had beene vpon the earth, or in the earth, and all manner of herbes which neuer had growne before:* whereby he giueth to vnderſtand, that the Lord cauſed all manner of pleaſant fruit, plant, tree, and greene herbe, to proceed out of the earth, to the clothing of the ſame (when it was before dry, bare, and naked) which alſo he ordained to be for food, for man and beaſt, *Gen.* 1. 29, 30. euen ſuch fruits *as neuer had beene in the earth*; that is, ſuch fruits as the earth had neuer borne before, nor could bring forth, till the Lord pleaſed to appoint the earth thereunto.

Here learne we, that it is the Lord God alone, which from the beginning hath cauſed all herbes and fruits which grow, to ſpring out of the earth: ſo that they come not ſo much forth by the ſtrength of the earth, as by the power of God: and that is the point which we haue here to conſider, namely, that

it is the Lord God which causeth yet daily all fruits to proceed out of the earth; the earth is only as Gods hand, wherein all fruits, plants, and herbes, are shut vp; which liberall hand, when it pleaseth the Lord to open it, *doth satisfie all liuing things, Psal.* 145. 15. see *Psal.* 104. 13, 14. Experience also teacheth vs, that it is all in vaine to haue good ground, to plant, and water, if God giue not the increase, 1 *Cor.* 3. 7. *Hag.* 2. 17, 18, 19, 20. for alas, the earth hath no strength of her selfe thereto, her belly is barren, if God giue not strength, and but that it is so common a thing, we should as much maruell that the *blacke earth* bringeth forth *white wheat*, as the Israelites did at the Manna that fell from heauen. For euen as the Prophet speaketh of the heauen, that *the heauen cannot giue raine, but it is the Lord God that doth all that, Ier.* 14. 22. so may we speake of the earth, the earth cannot beare any fruit, but it is the Lord that doth all that.

1. Hence haue we cause to complaine, that this is so little regarded of the husbandman and others more: the plough-man toyleth and moyleth, ploweth, soweth, &c. and thinketh seldome on the Lord: yea there are many that drinke, and swill, and prophane the holy Sabbaths of the Lord, and prouoke God to anger, euen while they are busie about the tillage of their land: yea some forbeare not to curse the God of heauen, because of the barrennesse of the earth; not once considering, that their dutie is to pray vnto him, and please him, that they might so obtaine the fruitfulnesse thereof. This verily is most lamentable, and yet is much practised: and very

very few are there among husbandmen, that know and acknowledge (as they ought) that it is God alone that must giue them the blessing, if they will bring in out of the earth a plentifull harueſt into the barne. For I beseech you consider the conuersation of the husbandmen, walke but thorow the villages, and hamlets, and see how many you shall finde, who by their life doe shew, that they holily beleeue that it is God that so faithfully euery yeere preserueth the harueſt, and giueth them the white graine out of the sable earth, that he it is which must giue them the increase, if they will not labour in vaine: search (I say) and you shall finde that many of their hearts are more senseleſſe in this kinde then the earth it selfe they till: they are they that continually husband the earth, that tread not a foot out of their doores, but they set their feet vpon the fruits and increase of the earth, and it is their daily worke to plucke the earths fruit out of her belly, that is, to fetch them out of the hand of God, to sell them, and thereupon to liue. But how many finde we of them, which doing this daily, are thereby stirred to lift vp their hearts to God, that great husbandman (that I may so speake with reuerence) out of whose hand they get daily so many faire fauours, to the end that they might learne to feare, and loue him? Who is there amongst them, that saith to his folke, *Let vs feare the Lord our God, who so faithfully euery yeere preserueth vs the harueſt, Ierem.* 5.24. Yea when we looke wel into the liues of many husbandmen, especially if we consider how they carry themselues on their feast dayes, and other prophane times of

iollitie, which they haue ordained for themselues, [illegible] finde, that whereas they ought, with *Noah*, that righteous husbandman, euen in this their time, and amids this dissolute and wicked world, to lead a religious life, *Gen. 6. 9.* they contrarily liue most dissolutely, and prophanely. And whereas they ought most to lift vp their eyes to God, as out of whose hand they come euery day to take their food, and are most louingly repleniſhed of him, yet they forget him most of all.

And as for his seruice, the preaching of his word, and the holy assemblies of his children, those haue they no affection or desire vnto. Yea the brutishnesse of many of them is in this respect so great, that they make it their whole weekes businesse, not sparing the Lords day it selfe (wherein they ought to rest, & addresse themselues to the seruice of the Lord, that so they might obtaine his blessing vpon their weekes labour) to moyle, toyle, and root in the earth; so that they allow themselues no time, nor respite at all, once to thinke on God, all the weeke long. And this wickednesse is chiefly committed in the time of harueſt, and when the husbandman hath greateſt cause to shew himselfe thankfull vnto God, for that he keepeth so faithfully their harueſt all the yeere long, that he giueth them life and health to doe their land-businesse. Euen then doe many husbandmen breake out in worldly toyle without all reason or measure: then thinke they, they haue leaue sufficient, weeke after weeke, to moyle in harueſt worke, scant once all the while looking after the preaching of Gods word, or the

the congregation of the faithfull. Yea many of them handle the matter ſo in their villages, that the Preacher may for ſo long ſhut the Church doores vp, ſtint his preaching, and hold vp all publike, ordinarie, and ſolemne worſhip of the Lord, if he had not ſome of his owne houſhold, or ſome ſpecial friends and acquaintance in the place where he dwelleth, to helpe him to hold vp ſome ſhew of a congregation: and which is moſt of all to be lamented, the husbandmen for the moſt part are ſo ſet on fire about their earthly toyle and labour, that euen when there is no pretending of any neceſſitie at all, no feare of dripping, or bad weather, yet men ſhall ſee the whole field (euen on the holy Sabbath of the Lord) ſtand full of harueſt worke and workemen: ſo that theſe poore men, which could doe no other but let the fruits of the earth ſtand, and remaine in Gods keeping all the yeere long, dare not truſt the Lord one day longer with them, when harueſt once begins to come, but fall vpon them, euen vpon his holy Sabbath, notwithſtanding he commandeth them that they *ſhould reſt vpon his Sabbath both from ſeed and harueſt*, *Exod.* 34. 21. Whence it appeareth that they wait not from God, but from themſelues to receiue the harueſt bleſſing: which verily is altogether moſt lamentable, and bringeth many plagues vpon husbandrie, and muſt in any hand be amended.

Now as for the citizens and inhabitants of Townes, they carry themſelues not a haire better. To them are brought in the fruits of the earth, and the cattell which are thereby fed, to feed and clothe them,

them, which yet haue not laboured, & taken paines for them: yea which, doe they all they can, are not able to cauſe one graine of corne, one grape, or one knot of flax to ſpring out of the earth. So that the Lord in this caſe may ſay vnto them, as he did to the children of Iſrael, that *he had giuen them cities which they had not built, houſes ful of goods, which they had not filled*, *Deu.6.10,11*. But what thanks giue they vnto God for this his goodneſſe, that he giueth them thus the full mow for which they neuer laboured? Verily, many of the citie-people ſwallow theſe bleſſings vp, as hogs doe akornes in a wood, not once looking vp to the trees from whence they fall, *not once regarding the worke of the Lord* (not conſidering it, namely as his worke) *and haue no reſpect vnto the creature of his hands*, as the Prophet complaineth, *Eſa.5.12*. yea many abuſe ſhamefully, againſt the Lord himſelfe, the good gifts which they haue receiued out of his hand, to pride, exceſſe, gluttonie, drunkenneſſe, and vncleanneſſe. O what a heauy and dolefull reckoning ſhall be giuen of this to God! How ſhall we euer be able to anſwer this, that we thus cleaue vnto the creatures, and abuſe them, againſt the Creator himſelfe? What an odious vnthankfulneſſe is this, ſo exceſſiuely to ſpoile that which God ſo kindly hath beſtowed on vs? Whereas we cannot make one little graine of corne, one grape of the vine-ſtocke, come againe, after we haue ſo vnprofitably waſted it. And this is the more miſerable, in that this we doe, while in the meane time, our poore brethren and ſiſters, the deare members of Chriſt, goe naked, and hungry. This is abo-

abominable, and yet is there nothing more common. O where is our Christianitie become? How agreeth this with our profession, whereof we boast so much, vaunting that we are reformed Christians? Verily this must be amended, or else we may looke for nothing but destruction, and ouerthrow.

2. To amend this foule abuse, and according to the exhortation of the Prophet, *learne to feare the Lord our God, which giueth vs in due time the first and latter raine, and faithfully euery yeere preserueth the harueſt for vs, Ier.* 5.24. hereunto ought we all, both countrymen and citizens, to stirre vp our selues, to the end that we may obtaine the blessing of the Lord vpon the increase of the earth; and that we may acknowledge his blessing in the vse thereof. Which is then done, when we sanctifie by the word of God, and prayer, 1 *Tim.*4.5. both our labour, and the fruit thereof. 1. by the word, ordering our labour according to the word of God, working and resting as he commandeth; and then after vsing the good gifts of God, which we through Gods blessing obtaine, moderately, and thankfully, according to the will of God. 2. by prayer, praying alwayes vnto God feruently, not slightly alone to keepe in our old tracke of so doing; but with all earnestnesse, as those that are throughly conuicted, that without the blessing of God, all our labour is in vaine.

How the Lord brought forth the fore-mentioned fruits.

THe Lord at the first brought forth the foresaid fruits of the earth without all meanes, only by his secret blessing: for, as our text saith, when the Lord caused the foresaid fruits to proceed out of the earth, *he had not caused it to raine vpon the earth, and there was yet no man to till the ground:* yea there was as yet no sunne to foster the earth; see *Gen.* 1. 11, 12, 14. which yet we know to be the ordinarie meanes of making the earth fruitfull. Thus hath the Lord in the beginning euidently shewen, and the effect manifested it, that he is not bound to any meanes; yea that *he, without the entercourse of any meanes, can blesse his creatures sufficiently, if he please:* and that is the point which we hereout haue to obserue.

The meanes which commonly God doth vse, in giuing vs his blessing, are indeed but as curtaines, and drawing clothes, after, or vnder the which, God so doth hide himselfe, that his working cannot be seene, but by the eye of faith: wherefore also the Lord God, when he hath beene pleased sometimes to manifest himselfe, in some worke which he intended to doe, hath taken expresse order, that the ordinarie meanes should be remoued, that so all the world might see the finger of God therein, and acknowledge that it was he that had done it. So said the Lord to *Gedeon, There is too much folke with thee, that I should deliuer Midian into their hands, Israel*

may

may haply boaſt himſelfe againſt me, and ſay, mine hand hath deliuered me, Iud. 7. 2. And this is the reaſon wherefore the Lord now and then doth very greatly humble his owne elect people for a ſeaſon; whom notwithſtanding he intendeth to exalt, and vnder whoſe feet he meaneth, at the laſt, to tread all their enemies; that it might appeare that all hangeth on his bleſſing alone, not on the worke of men. So ſuffered the Lord the Iſraelites, which were gone vp in a righteous cauſe againſt the Beniamites, diuers times to take the ouerthrow, ſo that they loſt in the firſt battell 22000 men, and in the ſecond 18000: and yet when as the Beniamites ſeeme to be maſters of the field, he turneth his hand, and giueth the other at the laſt great victorie ouer the Beniamites, ſo that they ſcattered the whole Tribe of Beniamin, ſlaying of them 25000, as we read *Iud.*20. Loe, thus doth the Lord ſtrip his people oftentimes of all outward meanes, when his purpoſe is to helpe them, to the end that his finger might the better be ſeene in giuing them victorie.

This reproueth them whoſe courage faileth them, when outward meanes faile them, as if God alſo then had forſaken them; whoſe heart fainteth, when they haue loſt the meanes, as if they had then loſt the Lord their God himſelfe. Whereas the curtaine being remoued, and the couering taken away, whereunder the Lord had hid himſelfe, they ſhould ſee far more clearely and euidently the Lord himſelfe to worke, if they could with *Abraham aboue hope beleeue vnder hope*, and reſt themſelues on God, *Rom.* 4. 18. This ought to be well conſidered of

them, which hauing an especiall earnest affection to the good of Gods Church, and their Country, listen, inquire, and aske with all diligence (as *Nehemia* did) *whether it goeth well with Iuda and Ieruſalem*; but comming to vnderstand, *that their brethren in the land ſuſtained great affliction, and reproch*, Neh. 1.3. that God according to his secret iudgement, *had giuen the cup of his wrath to Ieruſalem, her King, and the Cities about her to drinke*, Ier. 25.18. so that it seemeth in outward appearance, as if the Lord *would bring the crowne of his people to nothing, to nothing, to nothing, vtterly to nought*, Ezek 21.27. are then not only in heauinesse with *Nehemiah*, as is meet they should, but cast off all hope, as if the people of God were wholly perished, and that there were no helpe or counsell remaining, forgetting that the Lord our God, whom we serue, is a God so wonderfull, that, when all meanes are away, or lie troden vnder foot, can as readily, and with as much speed, helpe his people out of all their necessities, as if they had all the meanes of helpe at hand.

Queſt. Ought a man then to looke for as good successe of his affaires, when all meanes faile, as if he had all meanes at hand? For example, should one that were lost in a fearefull wildernesse, where he had no food in the world to refresh his bodie, as firmely beleeue, and as confidently trust, that he shall be fed at the time of his meales, as well as if he sate at a well furnished table?

Answ. Howsoeuer the meanes in regard of God, who is bound vnto no meanes, are but as curtaines wherevnder he hideth himselfe; yet in regard of vs, who

who are bound vnto the vſe of the meanes, when we may haue them, they are as the hands of God, whereby he is pleaſed ordinarily to reach vnto vs his bleſſing: wherefore when the meanes faile vs, then withdraweth God his hand, whereby he commonly vſeth to helpe vs: ſo that, though it be true, that God is not bound to the meanes; notwithſtanding, ſeeing he vſeth them ordinarily, as a hand, whereby he miniſtreth vnto vs his bleſſing, therefore when the meanes faile vs, we may well take it as a token of Gods anger and diſpleaſure againſt vs, and iuſtly be troubled thereat. Yet not ſo as commonly men are, as if without thoſe meanes there were no hope of helpe: but we are to be troubled, in that we eſpie the diſpleaſure of God againſt vs, in that he taketh away the meanes from vs, *Ioel* 1. 12, 13. & therefore in this caſe we ought to grieue, not becauſe we want the meanes, but becauſe we want Gods bleſſing. Otherwiſe though we want the meanes neuer ſo much, yet if we can apply our hearts to ſeeke earneſtly the fauour and bleſſing of God, then may we be of good comfort euen in the mids of the Lions den with *Daniel*, or in the fierie ouen with the three young men of Iſrael, or in the fearefull wilderneſſe with *Eliah*, or with King *Dauid* in his manifold wandrings, and chaſings to and fro before his enemie, *Pſal.* 6 being aſſured, that we ſo relying on God, ſhall certainly be holpen, if not iuſt ſo as we deſire, yet ſo as ſhall be beſt for vs both in life and death, *Dan.* 3. 17, 18. Euen as it hapned to *Abraham* when he was about to offer his ſon *Iſaac*, which yet was the only know[illegible] meane, by whoſe

life, both he, and his ſhould be ſaued: ſee *Gen.* 22.

But in this men commonly forget themſelues, for as the meanes faile them, in ſtead of marking Gods diſpleaſure in this caſe, in that he hath bereft them of the meanes, and of being thereby moued to examine themſelues, by what euill courſe they might haue angred the Lord, that ſo they might with all ſpeed ſeeke reconciliation with him, and endeuour to recouer his good fauour and bleſſing vpon them: in ſtead hereof (I ſay) they vſe (paſſing all this dutie ouer) only to trouble themſelues about the outward meanes, endeuouring firſt and chiefly to recouer them againe; and this doe they ſo wretchedly, that they feare not, in the hunting after the meanes, to enter ſuch courſes, as whereby the anger of the Lord is more and more inflamed againſt them; the anger of the Lord, I ſay, whereby the meanes were taken from them: wherefore if they would worke wiſely, they would ſeeke firſt to appeaſe Gods anger, by remouing that which hath incenſed him; which they not doing, but rather the contrary, intangle themſelues the more, and *make their bands the heauier*, *Eſa.* 28. 22. or if they ſeeme to haue obtained any deliuerance, tis only in Gods wrath, as Iſrael got the Quailes which they had luſted after: and this is that which we reproue, and warne all men to take heed of.

2. Comfort and incouragement to all thoſe that haue God on their ſide, and truſt in him. What if ye haue not the outward meanes at hand? If God be with you, who can be againſt you? What if you want the raine, the tillage of the earth, the comfor-

table

table ſunne? If ye haue Gods bleſſing, that is all in all, that will make vp all wants. Heare (I pray) what an holy boaſt the Church of God maketh in her chiefeſt diſtreſſes, out of the conſideration hereof that God was with her, which can and will helpe where no meanes of helpe ſeeme to be left. *God is our refuge, and our ſtrength* (ſay they) *a helpe in the great troubles which haue ouertaken vs: therefore we will not feare though the whole world were ſhaken, and the hils ſunke into the mids of the ſea; though the ſea raged, and were troubled, ſo that the hils fell therein by reaſon of the rage thereof. Selah. For there is a riuer which with his ſtreames doth glad the citie of God, where the holy habitations of the Lord are. Yea God is within her, therefore ſhall ſhe remaine, Pſal.* 46.1,2,3, 4,5,6. Vpon this ground the Church of God braueth her enemies by the Prophet *Micha*, euen when ſhe lay loweſt, and her enemies were moſt exalted; *I will looke vnto the Lord, and wait vpon God my ſaluation, my God ſhall heare me. Reioyce not ô mine enemie* (ſaith ſhe) *that I lie vnder foot, for I ſhall riſe againe; and although I ſit in darkneſſe, yet is the Lord my light: I will beare the anger of the Lord, for I haue ſinned againſt him, till he plead my cauſe, and doe me right, he ſhall bring me into the light, that I may be ſatisfied with his fauour. Mine enemie ſhall ſee it, and vtterly be confounded, which now ſaith vnto me, where is the Lord thy God? Mine eyes ſhall ſee it, euen when ſhe like dirt ſhall be trodden vpon the ſtreet, Mich.* 7. *v.* 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

Theſe and the like holy boaſtings, which the children of God make euen while all outward meanes

meanes faile them, are grounded vpon this propertie of God, that he is not bound to any meanes, that he can helpe as well with few, as many, as well when there are no meanes at all, as when they are present in the greateſt abundance. Conſider therefore whoſoeuer ye are, whom outward meanes do faile, what courage the Church of God hath had in her chiefeſt need, becauſe ſhe had God on her ſide: no childe of God then ought to be faint-hearted, though he be ſtripped of all outward meanes, for the Lord who is with him, is not bound to any meanes, his hand is not ſhortned that he ſhould not be able to helpe, though the meanes be ſhortned, yea quite cut off.

Yea that more is, and indeed the moſt grieuous caſe of all, though a childe of God finde himſelfe in this exigent, that his heart is inſenſible, drie, dead, and vnfruitfull, as the earth was in the beginning, yet ought he not in this caſe to let his courage ſinke, he muſt yet thinke that there is a God in heauen, whom he is taught to call vnto, as to his heauenly father, who very ſoone can awaken an inſenſible and dead heart, who can with the fire of zeale warme a dry and vnfruitfull heart, that it become fruitfull, and bring forth much good fruit. Behold the dry & blacke earth, and conſider what faire fruit the Lord can bring forth therof: ſo can he alſo make thy heart fruitfull; endeuour only for his bleſſing, and follow his counſell, & it ſhall goe well with thee at the laſt.

3. Hence haue we alſo cauſe to complaine, that whereas it ſtandeth thus with God, and all outward meanes, namely, that Gods bleſſing is all in all, and that without it, the meanes are iuſt nothing: that

that yet fooliſh men repoſe themſelues ſo wholly vpon the meanes, forgetting and neglecting in the meane time, the care of Gods fauour. Conſider how the world goeth, men riſe early and goe to bed late, and toyle all the day long; but what I pray ſeeke they? riches, honour, good eſtate, reputation, office, &c. and wherefore all that? a ſweet queſtion thinke they: for they doe it, becauſe thoſe are the meanes of a pleaſant, eaſie, and ioyfull life: whereas yet all the while, the bleſſing of God (which is all in all) is not reſpected, but quite forgotten of theſe men.

Yea men chaſe after the outward meanes ſo hotly, that they tread Gods counſell vnder their feet, and deſpiſe his fauour, and all this, only to haue a few outward things at hand, whereby they imagine that they ſhall liue the eaſier, and more pleaſant life. Hence it is, that many feare not to lie, deceiue, and to vſe diuers ſuch like things, which keep off the bleſſing of God wholly from them, and bring his curſe; and all this is done, only to purchaſe the outward meanes vnto themſelues. O fooliſhneſſe! For hence is it, that oftentimes an vtter miſchiefe commeth vpon Church, Common-wealth, merchandiſe, tradeſmen, particular families, and ouer all, namely, that men ſeeke more after the meanes then Gods bleſſing.

Obiect. Are we not then bound to vſe the outward meanes, that ſo we might proſper? Are we not bound to eat our bread in the ſweat of our faces? *Gen.* 3. 19. Are we not proclaimed for worſe then Infidels, if we prouide not for our wiues and children? 1 *Tim.* 5. 8. Wherefore then ſhould

any be offended at vs, that we diligently vſe the meanes?

Anſw. We acknowledge that men are bound to the vſe of the meanes, yea they are (as is aforeſaid) as the hands of God, whereby he vſeth to deale vnto vs his benefits, we are therefore bound to lay hand thereon, and to vſe them: we ſpeake not then againſt the right vſe, but againſt the abuſe of them. We ſpeake not againſt them which diligently vſe the meanes, that thereby they might obtaine Gods bleſſing, but we ſpeake againſt them, that vtterly forgetting Gods bleſſing, take care only for the meanes; which rather then they would want the meanes, would trample Gods fauour vnder their feet. This is that we reproue, which neuertheleſſe is daily practiſed: for as often as men are bold to lie, deceiue, prophane the Lords day, or to commit any other ſinne to compaſſe theſe outward meanes, ſo often reiect they Gods bleſſing for the meanes ſake. But what is more common then this?

Know then, ô man, which doeſt thus, that God hath commanded thee, that thou ſhouldeſt maintaine thy ſelfe by thy labour, trauell, and diligence, not ſo much with intent that thou ſhouldeſt thereby purchaſe riches, honour, reputation, outward eſtate, offices, &c. which are the outward meanes of a contented life: but rather that thou ſhouldeſt attend vpon Gods prouidence, and obey the will of God who hath created thee: for the Lord hath laid this trauell vpon man to humble him, *Eccleſ.* 1. 13. Therefore ought a man only to vſe the outward meanes, that he might therein attend on Gods prouidence,

uidence; with this minde ought he to goe about the workes of his calling the ſix dayes of the weeke (which are as remote meanes of getting thoſe neerer meanes of liuing, as are meat, drinke, money, &c.) to the end that obeying Gods commandement, *Gen.* 3.19. *Exod.* 20.9. he may procure the bleſſing of God, both vpon himſelfe, and all his houſehold. Thus farre, and no farther ought he to vſe the meanes, namely, to that end alone, that he ſeruing the prouidence of God in following his counſell, and doing his commandement, may obtaine his gracious bleſſing.

Which if it were wel conſidered of the children of men, there ſhould not any be found to remaine any longer ſo fooliſh, as to mingle their owne euill deuices, as lying, deceiuing, falſifying of wares, prophaning the Sabbath, hindering of Gods worſhip, &c. (againſt the counſell of God) with their endeuours in the ſeeking of the outward meanes, which yet fooliſh men are accuſtomed to vſe in ſeeking the outward meanes, as daily experience ſheweth. This I ſay, which is the ruine of ſo many Countries, Cities, and Families, ſhould not be done, if the former doctrine of the nature of God, and of the outward meanes were well conſidered. For then would men quickly make this reckoning, and thinke:

I ought only to vſe the meanes, to the end I might procure the bleſſing of God (which is all in all) vpon me and mine; it were therefore very madneſſe for me, to be ſo greedy on the meanes, that I ſhould goe mingle mine owne ſiniſter deuices (which hinder Gods bleſſing, and procure his curſe) with my

trauell which I vſe to get the bleſſing of God. For what were that elſe, but by the vſe of the meanes, which ſhould ſerue only to obtaine Gods bleſſing, to make it the farther off from me?

This is a certaine truth; yet one thing there is in the way, which troubles many that they cannot yeeld to it: for notwithſtanding all this, they ſee that thoſe that lie, deceiue, breake the Sabbath, and vſe the like lewd deuices, fare beſt in the world, come beſt vp, and become the richeſt men.

Anſw. Verily the bleſſing which theſe men get, is accurſed, as the Prophet *Malachie* threatneth, *cap.* 2.2. for the more of theſe outward meanes of well being they get vnto themſelues, the more of Gods curſe draw they in with them; which at laſt ſhall flie about their eares, namely, when they ſhall, being before ſtripped of all thoſe ſo beloued vanities of the world, be pulled downe to hell; as hapned to that rich man, *Luk.* 12. 20. and 16. 23. where they ſhal haue ſo much the more plagues, by how much more pleaſure they haue here enioyed, *Apoc.* 18. 7. Therefore all thoſe that loue the eternall welfare of their ſoules, ought to ſay with *Iacob*, *Let not my ſoule enter into the counſell of theſe men*, *Gen.* 49. 6. and conſider the ſpeech of the Pſalmiſt; which ſaith, *A little that the godly hath, is better then the great reuenues of the wicked*, *Pſal.* 37. 16.

4. Exhortation vnto vs all, that we, well conſidering the nature of the meanes, and of the bleſſing of God, guide our ſelues well in this buſineſſe, and in all our ſtudie and endeuour of well liuing, vſe this as a compendious helpe; that we ſeeke Gods bleſ-

ſing

sing aboue all, and that we depend no otherwise of the meanes, then so farre as we know the vse of them to be Gods ordinance, *Gen.* 3.19. *Exod.* 20.9. which among other Christian duties more, we ought to regard and practise for the obtaining of Gods blessing. Loe, thus to doe, is heauenly wisdome. Thus also will all that are taught of God (and consider the matter well) doe: for tis most certaine, that all our well-being is not shut vp in the outward meanes, it lieth not wound vp in the bread we eat, but in the hand of God, and the word of his blessing, *Matt.* 4.4. that is as the soule of all, *Hag.* 1. For euen as a sawe cannot sawe, nor a hatchet hew, without an hand that moueth them; so cannot the meanes doe vs any good, vnlesse the blessing of God, which is his hand, goe with them. This is a secret of Gods kingdome, which the children of this world vnderstand not, wherein notwithstanding, consisteth the true happinesse of all the children of men. And because the children of this world cannot, or will not vnderstand this point, therefore trouble they themselues much, and take great paines, euen to worke out their owne vtter ruine; whereas in deed and truth, they might obtaine the blessing of God here, and eternall life hereafter, with farre lesse paines. For doubtlesse, if many an earthworme, many a worldly man, which riseth early, sitteth vp late, and toyleth himselfe all the day, to compasse the meanes, which he counteth as the onely causes of his happinesse, had but taken halfe the paines, and vsed halfe that diligence to obtaine the blessing of God, and to be found in his fauour, he

had vndoubtedly obtained it, to his eternall comfort: whereas now oftentimes, with all his toyling and moyling, he inheriteth but the winde, and miſſeth both of the temporall and eternall bleſſing: then the which what greater fooliſhneſſe can there be imagined? We muſt therefore learne to be better aduiſed, and wiſer, being aſſured that if we alſo ſhould doe like theſe men, that that our diligence would riſe vp againſt vs in the great day of Gods iudgement, the deeper to condemne vs, that we haue not taken ſo much paines (whereof yet we were in time admoniſhed) to get Gods bleſſing, which is all in all, as we haue done in ſeeking the outward meanes, which can doe vs no good without the bleſſing of God. And the more is this folly to blame, becauſe the caſe is ſo, that we oftentimes ſeeking the meanes, doe miſſe of them: and whereas if we had ſought the bleſſing of God, with the ſame diligence wee haue heretofore ſought the meanes, we ſhould vndoubtedly to our eternall comfort haue found it.

How the Lord preſerued and maintained in the beginning the foreſaid *fruits of the earth.*

THe Lord God, which brought forth the fruits and increaſe of the earth (wherewith he clothed and adorned it) without any meanes, onely by his mighty word; the ſame fruits ſuſtained he in the beginning, by a ſpeciall and vnlooked for meane; namely, not by raine, and dew, as commonly

ly he doth, but by a mist, which ascended out of the earth, which was in steed of raine & dew: for so saith the text v. 6. *but a mist went vp out of the earth, and moistned all the ground*; that is, moistned the whole earth. Thus God so appointing it, did the earth sweat out a fog, or mist, and was by her owne sweat bedewed, and moistned, whereby the herbes of the field were refreshed, and quickned for a time, against the heat of the Sunne, &c. which on the fourth day began to shine, and continued euer after, *Gen.* 1. 14. Now this also was a wonderfull worke of God: he could as well haue caused to raine from aboue, as haue giuen moisture from beneath; but it pleased him so to doe, to giue vs (for whom all these things are written, *Rom.* 15. 4) betimes to vnderstand, that God, when yet he vseth any means to the exercising of his prouidence, is not bound to the ordinarie meanes, and iust to those which we thinke to be the only meanes of bringing to passe a matter; but that he can, any manner of way, bring his purpose to passe.

Sometimes without meanes, as before is shewed: sometimes by vnexpected meanes, as here by a mist of the earth: yea sometimes by very strange, yea contrary meanes; as we haue diuers examples thereof in the Scripture. In the first creation God brought forth all things out of nothing, vsing no meanes, but his sole word: so did the Lord preserue *Moses* forty dayes, and againe forty dayes without meat, *Deut.* 9 *vers.* 18. Further, God hath by very weake despised meanes, brought great things to passe; so hath he often giuen great victories by an

handfull

handfull of folke, *Iud.* 7. 1 *Sam.* 14. and otherwhere: the walls of Iericho fell downe by a cry; *Ios.* 6. and thus casteth he daily downe the strengths of Satan by the voice of weake men, the Ministers, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4. *Luk.* 10. 17, 18. thus fed he very much folke with very little bread, 2 *King.* 4. 42. *Matth.* 14. 15. so sustained he, long time, the widow of *Sarepta*, with a little meale and oyle, 1 *King.* 17. 14. and he strengthned *Elias*, with one meales meat to continue fortie dayes, 1 *Reg.* 19. and clothed the Israelites forty yeeres long with little clothing, *Deut.* 8. 4. and nourished *Daniel* and his fellowes better with very meane fare, then they were, that fed on the best, *Dan.* 1. 15. In like manner hath the Lord often by strange and vnheard of meanes, brought mighty things to passe; thus gaue he bread from heauen, water out of the stonie rocke, and out of the iaw of an Asse, *Iud.* 15. 19. many tunnes of oyle out of a cruze, 1 *King.* 4. Yea now and then worketh he against all meanes, or by contrary meanes: so sustained he the three men in the fiery furnace; and *Ionas* in the fishes belly; and *Daniel* in the Lions den: so fed he *Elias* by a greedy Rauen; and opened the eyes of the blinde by wiping some clay ouer them, *Ioh.* 9. and other such like things more, whereof we finde so many in the Scripture: all which serueth to this end, that we thereby might learne, that God is all in all, and *doth what he will in heauen, and earth, the sea, and all deepes*, *Psal.* 135. 6. So that the creatures of God (a thing well worthy the noting) worke not alwayes according to their owne nature, which they receiued of God in their first creation,

but

but ſometimes by the meere will and pleaſure of their Creator: in ſuch ſort, that whenſoeuer it pleaſeth him, the creatures worke both aboue, and contrary to their natures. If it pleaſe God the Creator, the Sunne ſhall ſtop her courſe, and ſtand ſtill in Gibeon, *Ioſ.* 10. 12. yea, goe backward, 1 *Reg.* 20. 10. yea, goe wholly downe at bright mid-day, *Luk.* 23. 44, 45. If the Lord will, the firme and cloſed earth ſhall open her mouth, and ſwallow *Dathan* and *Abiram*, *Num.* 16. If it ſeeme good to him, he can make the weake water, which is moued with a feather, to ſerue as a firme pauement to waike vpon, *Matth.* 14. 28, 29. Pleaſeth it the Lord ſo to ordaine, a little bread and wine, vſed according to his ordinance, ſhall be a meanes to apply the food of our ſoules vnto vs, *Mat.* 26. 26, &c. Thus the Lord maketh knowne himſelfe euery way to be abſolute Lord of all, and to be able to doe all, and to vſe all things according to his good pleaſure.

1. This ſerueth for a reproofe of thoſe, which will not be perſwaded, that any thing can be brought to paſſe, or effected, except they haue the meanes by them, wherewith to doe it, which means they imagine to be the only (or which indeed are according to the common courſe of nature the ordinarie) inſtruments of doing it; notwithſtanding they haue Gods word on their ſide, which promiſeth them that it ſhall goe well with them, according as the Lord God promiſeth all that feare him, *Pſal.* 37. 37. notwithſtanding this, (I ſay) through the weakneſſe of our faith, and the not pondering this truth of God, touching his wonderfull manner

of vsing the meanes, many Christian men are found very faultie in this point; for men presume to shorten the wisdome, to clip the power, and lessen the goodnesse of God through their vnbeleefe.

How many a man is there that imagineth, that if such a friend were not, he could not be prouided for? Falleth it out that he looseth him, he crieth out straight-wayes, I am vndone, I know not how I shall liue. So complained the Church of God, when she had lost her religious young King *Iosias*, as if there had beene no helpe left for her, *Ier. Lament.* 1. But what? Be it that your faithfull friend, and helper in your estate, is dead, is God therefore dead also? Or hath he but one blessing, as *Isaak*? Can he helpe you by no other meane? Can he not cause a mist to arise out of the earth, that may moysten you as well as the raine?

Others thinke that they cannot, in this wicked and crooked generation, hold open their house, vnlesse they lie, cozen, falsifie wares, breake Gods Sabbath, &c. this is their raine, whereby they must be moistned, or else they thinke they shall be wholly dried vp. But I pray were it impossible to the Lord, to cause a secret dew to arise out of some other coast? Could not he, by his secret blessing, make vp that which you thinke by such vnhallowed tricks to worke out? Is the Lord become so weake, that his children should not be holpen, but by such deuilish practises? God forbid. Tis nothing but our weakenesse, and vnbeleefe, that causeth vs so to thinke. Tis notwithstanding very common, tis daily found, that men seeking their owne welfare, doe

binde

binde the ſame to certaine outward meanes, by the vſe of which, and no other, they thinke to obtaine it: thus thinketh the couetous perſon, I cannot liue except I haue much money; the ambitious man, except he be in ſtate and office exalted aboue all his neighbours; the voluptuous, except they haue the full mow by them, wine, beere, companie, &c. at their pleaſure: theſe men (I ſay) will in no wiſe truſt the Lord, that he can, or will giue them their hearts deſire, and make them happy, without theſe outward meanes. Verily this is greatly to be reproued.

Well, that you ſeeke your owne welfare, that can no man be againſt; and when the Preachers preach, that men ſhould die to the world, and crucifie the old man, &c. their meaning is not, to make men wretched, and miſerable thereby (as ſome imagine) but their purpoſe therein is only to bring men to the true happineſſe, which all of vs ſeeke. So that neither God, nor his ſeruants, haue any thing againſt this, that men ſeeke their owne welfare, we all of vs ſeeke that; but this is that we complaine of, that you will haue it iuſt by thoſe meanes only, which ye imagine to be the only inſtruments of effecting your peace and welfare. This ought not to be. You ought to beleeue, and that with great reaſon, that God by other meanes, and after another manner, can ſatisfie you, and ſet you in a good condition. And therefore thus ought you to be affected; if you abound in the outward meanes of your owne welfare, that ye receiue them thankfully, and vſe them holily according to Gods will; if you want them, that you afflict not your ſoule with bootleſſe

care, but that ye rather thinke (as the truth is) that God, without those outward meanes, can notwithstanding giue you a heart better satisfied and contented, then the worldlings that haue all the means of riches, honour, reputation, and pleasure, in all abundance, in their hands, can possibly attaine vnto. As *Dauid* had experience, when he witnessed, that *If the Lord would but lift vp the light of his countenance vpon him* (which verily is of more force to refresh any heart, then a mist is to water the earth) *he should haue more ioy then all worldly men had, when their wine and oyle increased*, *Psal.*4.7,8. as *Paul* and *Silas* also felt, which hauing beene cruelly whipped, and after clapt into a darke dungeon, and set in the stocks, were notwithstanding so full of ioy, that they sung so loud, that the whole prison rung of them, *Act.*16.

But Satan hideth deceitfully this from the eyes of men, and thence it is that multitudes of them fall from God, whose blessing yet is all in all, and depend vpon the meanes, and seeke therein by might and maine their ioy and comfort, which yet can doe them no good without the blessing of God. Whence it is, that they take so much bootlesse paine, and toyle themselues in vaine all their dayes, seeking rest sometime herein, sometime therein, but finde it no where, so long, till at last, all panting and labouring after some vaine, transitorie, earthly thing, they be seized on by death, which plucketh them away from their bootlesse paines here, into eternall sorrow hereafter. This befalleth these poore and wretched men through vnbeleefe,

and

and through want of due considering the wayes of God, in the exercising of his prouidence, in the prouiding for the children of men which depend vpon him; & because they would not trust the Lord, that he would truly & faithfully haue done wel by them, had they but followed his counsell; if not iust according to their wish, that is, by such meanes, and in such manner as they imagined, yet surely in such manner, and by such meanes, as they should finde best contentment in, and whereby true happinesse should haue beene giuen them.

Euen as God, to the conuicting of all men, causeth it to appeare oftentimes in his owne children, which may truly testifie to all the children of the world, that they finde more ioy, comfort, and contentment in the seruice of their God, and doing his holy will, though it is not done of them without strife and contending, then all the other haue in all their sinfull courses; for that draweth the children of God vp to heauen, through our Lord Iesus Christ, but this pulleth sinners downe to hell.

2. This giueth comfort and courage to all those that haue learned to follow the counsell of God, to cast themselues vpon his prouidence, and to wait for his blessing, to be giuen of him, in such manner, and by such meanes, as best please his Maiestie, whether that be by raine, or mist, or any such like means. Be comforted all ye that are thus resolued, for it shall certainly goe well with you; you haue that great God on your side, who by small, and weake, yea contrary, and against all meanes can bring great things to passe. What then if you haue not at hand

the ordinarie meanes? He can in ſtead of a raine, giue you ſuch a miſt, as ſhall alike refreſh you. All yee, I ſay, that thus according to Gods word, through faith doe caſt your care on God, conſider, and learne; Hath God taken ſuch care for the graſſe of the field, and ſhall he not take much more care for you? *Mat.* 6. 30. Know you not alſo that your life and welfare is not ſhut vp in the meanes, but in Gods hand? which is the richeſt treaſure in the world, whereout (if he pleaſe to open it) he bringeth the fulnes of bleſſing forth, *Pſ.* 145. 15 Behold the Lord needeth but to ſpeake the word, and the meanes ſhall readilier run to him to helpe you, then the Centurions ſeruants could euer doe, to ſerue him at his command, *Mat.* 8. 9. Euen your enemies, which now oppreſſe you, ſhall be compelled fainedly to ſerue you, ſo ſoone as it ſhall pleaſe the Lord to take your cauſe in hand, *Pſal.* 18. 45. We reade that King *Ahaſueroſh* commanding that *Haman* ſhould ſo and ſo honour *Mordechai*; *Mordechai* (I ſay) whom he hated as a Spider in his heart, that *Mordechai*, for whom he had already prepared a gallowes, to hang him thereon, he did yet notwithſtanding readily obey, *Heſt.* 6. Shall then a King, an earthly King, haue ſo much power and authoritie ouer his ſubiects? and ſhall not the King of Kings, the King of Heauen, haue power to make our enemies ſerue vs, and doe vs good, in this, or that manner, whether they will or no? How greatly were the Ægyptians enraged againſt the Iſraelites, yet God ſo ordered the matter, that they lent the Iſraelites many ſiluer and golden veſſels to enrich them

1 *Pet.* 5. 7.

with,

with, *Exod.*3.21,22. Yea in the greateſt need you can fall into, looke but vnto the Iſraelites condition in the wilderneſſe, which was a figure of the manifold toſſing to and fro of the children of God in this wide world. How fared they? Did not the Lord make vp all their wants, by his ſecret bleſſing? Were they an hungred, and was there no bread at hand, did he not cauſe bread to raine downe from heauen? Were they athirſt, and was there no water neere, did not the Lord God cauſe water to come out of the rocke? Had they no meanes at hand to renue their clothes in the wilderneſſe, when they ſhould be worne out, did not he cauſe their clothes to endure forty yeeres, without waxing old? Be not then weake in faith, ye deare children of God, *be not carefull what yee ſhall eat, or drinke, or what yee ſhall put on, Matth.*6.31. Behold how the Lord can prouide for his children, when time is, that they ſhould be prouided for. But finde you that your enemie perſecuteth you, yea doe you finde that your ghoſtly enemie oppreſſeth you ſore, and finde you your ſelfe as left alone; conſider then alſo the children of Iſrael, which being hardly b[illegible] and purſued of *Pharaoh*, obtaine a dry foot paſſage thorow the ſea, are preſerued, and ſee their enemies periſh before their eyes.

The conſideration then of Gods order, which he vſeth about the meanes, which are inſtruments of his prouidence, may well ſtrengthen euery Chriſtian in all his neceſſities: ſee *Pſal.*49.12,13. *Pſal.* 119.42,&c. When we are in any ſpeciall need, our hearts vſe to be much cumbred, becauſe we ſee not God

God to afford vs thoſe meanes, which we eſteeme to be helpfull to vs in our need: but could we once thorowly conſider of this order of God about the meanes, we ſhould winne great reſt vnto our mindes thereout. Marke it well, I pray you, had we beene at the firſt creation of things, we ſhould haue beene alſo much cumbred about many of them, fearing they would not haue well fell out, conſidering the outward conueyance which God vſed therein, but yet we ſee how glorioufly the Lord perfected all the worke: ſo likewiſe if we could now let the Lord alone, and commit our wayes only vnto him, he would certainely bring it to paſſe, *Pſal.* 37.5. and cauſe all things at the laſt to turne to the beſt vnto vs, *Rom.* 8.28. euen as he hath made it knowne in many occurrences hapning in the life of his children. Know we not that in the thing which moſt afflicted *Iacob*, namely, in the loſſe of his ſonne *Ioſeph*, was wound vp his chiefe bleſſing (though he knew it not) as the iſſue manifeſted? Therefore our dutie is alwayes, as any thing falleth out contrary to our mindes, thus to thinke: God [illegible]onderfull in his wayes, there may an vnexpected bleſſing lie hid herein; and thereupon ſhould we be moued to poſſeſſe our ſoules in patience, till it pleaſeth him to bring all things to light, that ſerue for our comfort. And here we may well ſay that to our ſoules of God, which *Naomi* ſaid of *Boaz* to *Ruth*, *Sit ſtill, ô my ſoule, till thou know how the matter will fall, for the Lord will not reſt till he hath brought it to an end*, *Ruth* 3.18.

But, the matter ſtanding thus betweene God and his

his people, his people may seeme to haue cause (now in our dayes, that the matters of the Church of God goe so crosse) to say with *Gedeon*, *If the Lord be with vs, how hath this befallen vs, and where are all the wonders, which our forefathers haue declared to vs, saying, the Lord hath led vs out of Egypt, but now hath the Lord forsaken vs, and giuen vs into the hands of the Midianites, Iud.6.13.*

Answ. The Lord suffereth this oftentimes to come to passe, for diuers and weighty reasons, all which end at the last with the good of Gods people, of which I will briefly rehearse some.

First, and formost then, the Lord, *which is so ready to helpe, Psal.13.6.* suffereth his people to fall often into great necessities, to giue them well to vnderstand, and to consider, what a grieuous woe and miserie sinne hath procured vnto them, (for all Gods children know, that sinne is the mother of all their woe, *Psal.107.17.*) Heare (I pray you) what the Lord himselfe saith hereof to his chosen people, when he had let them fall into distresse, *It is (saith the Lord of hosts) for your wickednesse, and disobedience, that you are so punished; and so must yee vnderstand and proue, what an euill and bitter thing it is to forsake the Lord your God, and not to feare him, Ier.2.19.*

2. The Lord doth this, to the end that his people may thereby be brought to a diligent examination of themselues; that they by those distresses which the Lord bringeth them into, might be moued with *Dauid, to consider their wayes, and to turne their feet vnto his testimonies, Psal.119.59.* The Lord in this

is very wonderfull: *Dauid* had onely neglected to cauſe the Arke to be carried as it ought, and there came a great breach from the Lord among the people, for that neglect, which diſturbed all their reioycing, 2 *Sam.6.* Why did the Lord ſo? For what other cauſe, then that *Dauid* ſhould examine what part of Gods ſeruice had been in that buſineſſe neglected, (namely, that he had ſuffered the Arke to be drawne with beaſts, which ought to haue beene borne on the Leuites ſhoulders) and might amend it, that ſo alſo he might be the better bleſſed, according as he found afterward, 1 *Chron.*15.26. So ſuffered the Lord the Iſraelites to be ouerthrowne of the Beniamites, which they ſought to puniſh, for their villanous whoredome, to the end that they themſelues might take notice of the Idolatry which had ſuch ſway among them: ſee *Iud.* 17, 18, 19, 20 chapters.

3. The Lord ſuffereth his people ſometimes to fall into great exigents, to proue their faith, to exerciſe their patience, and other holy graces, which he hath beſtowed vpon them. A hardie ſouldier is not tried till the battell grow hot: how ſhould the graces which God had beſtowed on *Dauid*, and others, haue appeared, if the Lord had not ſuffered many turmoiles in the world to befall them? If he had not, when he purpoſed to make him King of all Iſrael, cauſed him to flie before his enemie for a time, and to be hunted like a Partridge from one place to another? 1 *Sam.*24.15, &c.

4. And laſtly, the Lord ſuffereth his people to fall into diſtreſſe ſometime, to the end that he may thereby

thereby the more confound his enemies, and get the more honour to himselfe. For so soone as the people of God fall into any difficultie, their enemies, out of a spitefull minde, begin to thinke, that they are wholly gone, whereupon they begin to mocke at them, and to prognosticate their vtter ruine; they begin to shake the head at them, to put out the tongue, and to cry out, *Aha, aha, now they are perished*, according as they once scorned *Dauid*. Now when as the matter is come thus from them, then the Lord raiseth vp himselfe, and turneth all the boasting of the aduersaries of his people into a lie, and turneth also his peoples case so, that they hold vp their heads, in despight of all their enemies, and that *their woe is turned into ioy, and their griefe into merry-making, Hest. 9.22.* Thus are the enemies of Gods Church most confounded, God glorified, and his people comforted.

Seeing then that this is the dealing of God with his people, the people of God thence are learned to be of good courage, euen when their enemies spread forth themselues, and flourish like a Lawrel, *Psal. 37.35.* yea when they climbe high, and seeme to dominere ouer all, euen then ought they to pluck vp their hearts, and say with the Psalmist, *When men rage against thee, thou gettest renowne thereby; and when yet they rage, thou remainest in peace. Beleeue, and trust in the Lord thy God: bring gifts to him that is to be feared, which confoundeth Princes, and is terrible to the Kings of the earth, Psal. 76.10,11,12.* How miserable was the estate of the Iewes in the time of *Haman?* when the King had sent out a command,

*that all the Iewes, both young and old, women and children, ſhould be deſtroyed, and rooted out in one day, Heſt.*3.11. yet how ſoone did the Lord change it, and ſo rule the matter, that *vpon that very day, when the enemies of the Iewes thought to haue deſtroyed them, it fell out, that the Iewes deſtroyed them, Heſt.*9.1. This God liueth ſtill, he loueth his Church ſtill, he ruleth ſtill, he hateth ſtill the enemies of his Church; let vs then but depend vpon this our good and mercifull God, and diligently conſider the counſell which his word giueth vs hereunto appertaining, and he ſhall ſpeedily (euen as he well can) ſhew great ſaluation to his people, in what corner of the world, in what familie, and in what ſort ſoeuer they may be oppreſſed.

Amen.

FINIS.